

Governor visits 179th during tour of Guard

By: MSgt. Randy Dunham
179th Wing Historian

SMSgt. George Velez completed his briefing about the success of the Medical Squadron's deployment to Belize to the room full of planners and leaders. Most nodded their approval at the benchmark deployment.

Then Velez began talking about a rating the Medical Squadron hopes to achieve that will make them available to support Federal Emergency Management Agency requirements to establish something similar to a M*A*S*H unit in the time of a national emergency. A huge smile flashed across his face when the man at the head of the table offered a sincere "call me if there's anything I can do to help."

That man was the governor of Ohio, and he was offering his help to one of the best Medical Squadron's in the nation. The governor visited the 179th during the September UTA to view firsthand how his troops were preparing for an upcoming inspection and to check the status of the 179th's deployment capabilities.

"The most important thing you need to know is that we're ready," said Col. Richard Green, 179th Airlift Wing commander. "As you can see from our deployment history, our state of readiness and our commitment from our unit members – we're ready."



Gov. Bob Taft conducts a mass re-enlistment during his visit to the 179th AW in September.

During his visit to the base, Taft administered a reenlistment oath to 13 unit members.

"That gesture by the governor will go a long way in helping with retention and in boosting morale," said MSgt. John Gibson, NCOIC career enhancement. "Those 13 people will also have a nice keepsake to look back on after they've ended their Guard careers."

In addition to the command briefing and the reenlistment ceremony, the governor toured the base, ate lunch at the base dining facility with some

enlisted unit members, received a chemical warfare demonstration and toured a C-130.

"I'm here to thank the Guard for the sacrifice its members make to protect us and our liberties," Taft said. "They know freedom is not free. We're very proud of them."

The visit to the unit by the governor was the second in less than a year. He came to Mansfield shortly after Sept. 11, 2001 as some security forces members were about to be activated.

Life is good and bad

By: Chaplain Bob Jackson

The great puzzle of life is that it is much a mixed bag of good and bad, joy and pain, the ordinary and the tragic. All generations have wondered about this. If God is so good, why do bad things happen? Some we bring on ourselves, but often there is no known reason. It is a mystery (something beyond our understanding) that we must deal with. While we may never understand life, Scripture offers some helpful insights. Job loses everything and after his wife

wishes he were dead, he responds "We accept good things from God; and should we not accept evil?" He might not understand but he was going to work with what he had. One of my favorite sayings echoes this. "Events do not change us, our reactions do!"

St. Paul reminds us not to become discouraged for "despite the increase of sin, grace has far surpassed it." After the destruction of Jerusalem, Jeremiah wrote to the survivors, "for I know well the plans I have in mind for you, says the Lord. Plans for your welfare, not for woe! Plans to give you a future full of

hope" (29:11). Faith does not take away the pain of dealing with the mental, physical and emotional challenges of life, but it gives us a well founded hope for throughout history goodness has overcome the temporary dark nesses that cloud human life. Just before Jesus raised the dead little girl to life, he told her parents "fear is useless, what is needed is trust" (Mk 5:36). Trust in God, trust in what God has created in you and your brothers and sisters, trust that God's plan is to bring us good even out of the pain we suffer for with God all things are possible.